

February 4, 2003

## 1.0 Call to Order

President Posey called the meeting to order at 10:55 a.m.

The following members were present: Kim Brown, Cheryl Burnette, Kim Busche, Melissa Carpenter, Shannon Davis, Sally Donovan, Carol Dunaway, Tommy Dye, Mike Giles, John Green, Lin Harper, John Hayman, Kathy Hayman, Keri Hensarling, Myra Herndon, Mary Ann Iverson, Robin Johnson, David Kinsey, Kenton McNeese, Polly Odom, Pam Posey, Jan Roberts, Arlin Steen, Frances Sudduth, Mary Virgil, Trisha Wilbanks, Sam Williams.

## 2.0 Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted with minor corrections.

## 3.0 Call for Proxies

The following members were represented by proxy: Rusty Anderson by Frances Sudduth, Willie Heard by Trisha Wilbanks, Ray Scott by Sam Williams.

The following members were absent without representation: Susan Blackwell, Charmine Hill, Larry McMickle.

## 4.0 Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the January meeting were approved with minor corrections.

## 5.0 Officer's Reports

### 5.1 President's Report – Pam Posey

Item 1: In accordance with the attendance policy set forth by the Staff Council Bylaws, we will declare two seats in the service maintenance area vacant as of today. We also received a resignation notice from Bradley Bridges. His position will be filled. We are happy that Kim Brown has agreed to fill Joan Brashears term. Please welcome her to Staff Council.

Should you have any questions about your attendance status, please contact me.

#### Item 2: Meeting with Dr. Thames, Friday, January 17, 2003

Dr. Thames called a meeting with the campus leaders for 8 a.m. on Friday, January 17, in his office to inform us what was being announced at the State of the University Address at 9 a.m. that morning. Dr. Cabana, Faculty Senate President; Toby Parker, student representative; Kip Sharp, graduate student representative; and I were in attendance. Dr. Paul and Dr. Ginn were also present. At the same time, the provosts were meeting with the deans of the academic colleges. Dr. Thames informed us that the academic colleges would be reorganized into five new colleges and that the executive cabinet had been studying this reorganization plan, and the IHL Board approved the plan at Thursday's meeting. Dr. Thames stated that due to past reorganization attempts and the "in-house" fighting that had occurred in the past, he felt it was his responsibility with the Executive Cabinet to study and make those decisions; immediate action was necessary. Dr. Thames stated also that the IHL Board had been discussing the need for the universities to be more efficient and to "streamline" their operations. I stated that in the past the university seemed to continue to hire staff during such reorganizations and that we needed to take care of our current staff. I also asked him if there would be a hiring freeze so that those staff members in the affected colleges would have an opportunity to relocate to other positions on campus, if necessary, once some of the details of the reorganization had been settled. Dr. Thames said he would review how many staff members were to be affected with the academic reorganization plan.

#### Item 3: Executive Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 21, 2003

Kenton and I met and discussed the agenda for the February meeting and reviewed the constitution and bylaws.

#### Item 4: Cabinet Meeting, Monday, January 27, 2003

Dr. Cabana announced that a special faculty senate meeting was called for Friday, January 31, 2003, to discuss reorganization. Blake Hamm and M. T. McNabb both stated that the criticism they were

hearing from the students regarding the reorganization plan was not having details. Dr. Hudson announced that Dr. Jim Williams received a Spirit of the Coast award. Dr. Ginn and Dr. McFall announced that the House and Senate had appropriation bills funding education, but that the language in the bills needed to be reviewed closely. Mr. Giannini thanked all for support of the basketball game on the Coast; USM has not played on the Coast since 1994; he also announced that a press conference is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 2003, to announce the new look of Southern Miss Athletics. Dr. Joe Paul announced that enrollment was up slightly compared to this same time last year. Dr. Dvorak stated that a new incentive for faculty would be announced soon to encourage faculty productivity in research; USM has an outstanding 65.5 success rate of funded proposals. I stated again my concern of staff losing their jobs with the reorganization and commented that I didn't see how the current deans' offices could go forward to reorganize at the same time search committees are interviewing a dean. I asked if staff were to be included on the search committees, and if so, where would recommendations be sent. Dr. Thames asked that the faculty senate, student body, and staff submit recommendations to the Provost Office.

At the end of the President's report, Mike Giles voiced concern over the decision of only two staff members on each Dean's Search Committee. These two staff members may not be Staff Council Representatives. If so, how will Staff Council be informed of the status of these committees? This discussion will be held under new business.

## 5.2 President-Elect's Report - Kenton McNeese

Item 1: IHL Board of Trustees Meeting, Jackson, Thursday, January 16, 2003

Mr. Scott Ross asked the IHL Board to review the Facilities Maintenance Plan as printed. The IHL Board is reviewing a facilities maintenance plan for all universities within the state. It has been recognized that our campuses are understaffed, and the staff we have are underutilized. A plan will be developed to provide equal funding to all facilities groups based upon educational space at each institution. We need to see a shift from new construction to a true maintenance plan for our campuses. There is also a need for a

more uniform reporting standard established by the IHL Board to supply valid data to review the campuses in the future. It was also mentioned that a task force needs to be created at the IHL Board office to assist smaller universities with the needed expertise in dealing with construction and maintenance that is presently at our larger institutions.

Dr. David Potter was appointed as the Commissioner of Higher Education to fill the position left vacant by Dr. Thomas Layzell. Dr. Potter will receive an annual salary of \$260,000, which is below the average of our adjoining states.

Item 2: Faculty Senate meeting, Friday, January 17, 2003, and Friday, January 31, 2003

The agenda was suspended. Dr. Thames, Dr. Grimes, and Dr. Hudson plus several members of the cabinet addressed the Faculty Senate. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the announcement of the reorganization of the colleges at the university. Dr. Thames accepted questions and provided direct response to many questions from the floor. Dr. Grimes and Dr. Hudson remained for the entirety of the meeting fielding questions from the floor. The Faculty Senate will meet again on January 31. The following open letter from the Faculty Senate was presented to Dr. Thames.

In a January 25, 2003, story in the Clarion-Ledger, a spokesperson for the USM administration acknowledged that the Faculty Senate is the elected faculty governing body at USM. The Faculty Senate was established to provide a forum for faculty and others to discuss and debate ideas and issues that affect the university and its people. From the Senate's inception until the time you became president, it was understood that faculty and staff should have input into major changes at the university. Successful and sustainable changes result from the efforts of faculty, staff, and other stakeholders who are partners in shaping the changes and in implementing them.

In the aftermath of your January 17 restructuring announcement, there has been much conversation across the campus community about decisions you have made since you became president. On Friday, January 31, members of the Faculty Senate voted to send this open letter to you to convey our collective position about

decisions you have made that are of deep concern to us and to those we represent. We focus our attention on several prominent examples and offer related commentary.

Your decision to fill at least eight senior administrative positions in summer 2002 without any formal searches and in absence of input from faculty and staff is a marked departure from what should occur at a university with the stature of USM. Your decision to implement a massive academic restructuring without input from Faculty Senate, Faculty in general, staff, students, or representatives of units that will be affected is fully out of step with a commitment to inclusion and with what our campus community has a right to expect from its top leadership team. There's too much expertise among the faculty to be ignored by you and your provosts.

We join with others in expressing our distress over your treatment of the deans. It was inappropriate to inform people outside the university about the termination of deans as administrators the night before deans were told. Further, to surprise deans with the news just moments before your public announcement on restructuring marginalizes the commitments and contributions that these academic leaders have made to our university. Teamwork and trust were severely compromised by you and your provosts when you decided to treat the deans in the manner you did.

Beyond expressing our deep concerns about decisions you are making and about involving only the few in determining major decisions that affect the many, we hope this open letter will achieve more. We urge you and your provosts to reconsider parts of the restructuring framework. We urge you and your provosts to provide opportunities for reactions and responses to the restructuring framework and to listen to the input. We suggest that a specific calendar for restructuring be developed that includes a time frame for input, a process by which that input will be digested, and feedback loops. We also urge you and your provosts to provide specific detail on your estimates of projected cost savings from restructuring and detail on the \$278,000 in saving that you have said have already been achieved at senior administrative levels.

Shortly after IHL Board of Trustees appointed you as president of USM, a Hattiesburg American editorial contained the statement, "For Thames to succeed as president, he needs to establish immediate

rapport with the campus community. Moreover, he needs to demonstrate that he possesses the interpersonal skills required of a university president.” Part of a January 26, 2003, Hattiesburg American editorial reads, “Unfortunately, the manner in which Thames has handled the reorganization effort has further fractured a university campus that was, in some respects, already demoralized and divided.” The editorial continues, “The process begs the question: Does Thames respect university employees? Does he truly value their input?” Mr. President, the evidence to date strongly suggests you are in danger of further fracturing and demoralizing the campus community, and that you and your provosts do not value input. Low morale can accelerate loss of faculty, whereas good communication promotes better morale and commitment to the institution.

A statement from the June 1999 USM strategic plan reads, “Good communication is a key to building community, and the university should use every vehicle at its disposal to facilitate communication.” We ask that you begin the process of making respect, trust, and inclusion pillars of your administration through an intensive effort to communicate with faculty and staff. The Faculty Senate needs to be a partner in rebuilding respect, trust, inclusion, and morale at our university. For us not to be involved will hamper this university, yours and ours, in its efforts to build on distinguished achievements and move forward for the future.

We look forward to your timely response.

### Item 3: Reapportionment

The process will take place during the month of February. Numbers will be collected and the findings presented at the March meeting.

### 5.3 Assignment of Action Items

- Action item #89 – Parking Garage – assigned to University Relations

In the past there has been discussion of a parking garage possibly being built in the parking lot directly north of the Bobby Chain Technology Building. As the new Student Life Center will be opening within two to three years, what is the current status of this or any

parking garage? I am anticipating events in the new Student Life Center that will be attended by a large number of people. This new facility will be the center of entertaining on campus. At this time there is not enough parking – even at night – to support these functions. One suggestion was to build a parking garage on the above-mentioned lot that actually had a walking ramp into the 3rd floor of the new Student Life Center. An additional suggestion was to take the proposed parking garage and include three to four floors of academic building on the top, giving the university a much needed three to four level parking garage under a three-to four-level academic building.

I do believe this is the time to seriously address this. What actually is the status of a parking garage? If there is not a status of one, how can we begin the process of planning for one or a suitable solution?

- Action item #90 – Rewards – assigned to Salaries and Benefits

To boost employee moral and reward them for all their hard work, spring break off for staff members, too, would be appreciated. As there have been no raises, nor are raises pending, and with the increase in cost of medicine, insurance, co-pays, cost of living, etc., some sort of goodwill compensations would be a nice gesture. I have spoken with numerous staff members, and this is the general consensus.

- Action Item #91 – Staff Council Meeting minutes on line – assigned to Technology

I am concerned that there are no minutes for the 2002–2003 year to this point on the Web site. How does a staff member find out what is happening since they are not mailed out due to costs?

- Action Item #92 – Security Code Word or phrase –

assigned to University Relations

In the interest of security, I think we should have some kind of code word or phrase that could be called in to the campus police in case of emergency. If a staff member found themselves or a co-worker in a threatening situation, a brief call with minimal speaking could make all the difference. I think we need to be pro-active in

providing a secure work environment, and just because something has not happened up to this point does not mean it won't. I know that we have 911, but usually they require you to describe the situation and stay on the line, options that may not be available in extreme circumstances.

## 6.0 Old Business

### 6.1 Intercession Break Proposal

President Posey reported that the proposal was ready to be submitted at the Monday Cabinet meeting, but considering the discussion was devoted primarily to the reorganization processes, she did not see it as an appropriate time to bring up the proposal.

There was a motion from Kim Busche to reconsider the wording of the proposal. Seconded by Myra Herndon. Discussion was held and the new wording reads as follows:

“ We request that staff members be given Monday, December 22, 2003 and Friday, January 2, 2004, as part of the intercession break.”

The motion carried unanimously. President Posey will work with the Executive Committee to prepare a proposal to submit to the Cabinet. She will also make available, if necessary, a list of options as discussed from this meeting and last month's meeting. Anyone with other ideas/options should send them to President Posey by the end of the week.

## 7.0 Committee Reports

### 7.1 Constitution and Bylaws – Kathy Hayman

The committee will need to meet to consider the new restructuring plan for the university. The restructuring will impact our Gulf Coast representation. This will need to be done quickly.

### 7.2 Legislative – Rusty Anderson

Rusty and his staff are coordinating the USM Career Fair today at the Payne Center. President Posey received this update from Lisa Mader regarding Dr. Thames' interaction with the legislature.

- \* December 16 – hosted lunch on campus for Hattiesburg Legislators. Those attending were Percy Watson, Joey Fillingane, Mike Lott, Lee Jarrell Davis, and Joe Ellzey

- \* Hosted dinner on campus for Gulf Coast Legislators. Those attending were Dirk Dedeaux, Daniel Guice, Roger Ishee, Diane Peranich

- \* December 26 – 28 – Hosted Senate Appropriations Chairman Jack Gordon at the Houston Bowl in Houston

- \* January 9 – Attended MEC Capitol Day. The speakers were Gov. Ronnie Musgrove and Frank Melton. Met and talked with the following legislators. House of Representatives: Steve Holland, Joey Fillingane, Charlie Capps, Tim Ford, Percy Watson, and Bobby Moody. Senate: Jack Gordon, “Bunky” Higgins, Amy Tuck, Rob Smith, Barbara Blackmon, Terry Burton, Willie Simmons, Hillman Frazier, Tom King, and Deborah Dawkins.

- \* January 13 – Dr. Thames and Dr. Ginn met with the legislative budget office staff to outline funding issues.

- \* January 14 – Dr. Thames held a lunch meeting with various legislators and assisted in hosting the Gulf Coast reception for legislators in Jackson.

- \* January 21 – attended reception and briefing for legislators south of Jackson to discuss reorganization at Southern Miss.

- \* January 28 – attended the hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee to discuss funding for higher education – spoke before the committee.

- \* January 29 – was in meetings with both Representative Steve Holland and Senator Jack Gordon to discuss education appropriation bill.

### 7.3 Salaries and Benefits – John Hayman

Action Item #84 concerning the level increase has been researched and it was determined that this level increase was due to a reclassification of the person holding the position. This closes the matter.

### 7.4 University Relations and Cultural Diversity – Robin Johnson

Action Item #83 concerning the \$100 book allowance – a letter was sent to Dr. McFall asking her consideration in this matter. This past fall 283 staff members took classes. It cannot be determined of those 283 who took two classes, which would qualify them for this benefit if it were approved. Kathy Hayman raised the question concerning where the money will come from to cover the cost of this benefit, if it were approved. The bookstore is no longer able to help absorb this cost. The committee will report further when information from Dr. McFall is received.

7.5 Technology and Training – Lin Harper – no report

7.6 Other Committee Reports

A. Parking Appeals Committee – David Kinsey

There were a total of 41 appeal forms accepted and presented to the court. Of the 20 wishing to be present, seven were upheld, and 13 were denied. Of the 21 who did not wish to be present, eight were upheld and 13 denied. Of the 15 citations that were upheld, three were reduced at a total amount of sixty dollars. Original revenue of these citations was one hundred fifty dollars.

David thanked the Staff Council for the prayers and concern over his wife's illness. Her cancer is benign, and she is doing much better.

B. Transportation Committee – Polly Odom – no report

C. Student Life Center – Kathy Hayman

Building is under construction. Please take time to stop and see the progress.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Staff members on the Dean's Search Committees

General discussion was held relevant to the makeup of these very important committees. Kathy Hayman made a motion, with Mike Giles seconding, as follows:

“The two staff members that serve on the Dean’s Search Committees for each College be requested to provide a periodic progress report to the Staff Council.”

The motion carried unanimously. President Posey will advise the provost office of our request.

## 8.2 Election Committee Appointments

An Election Committee needs to be appointed. This committee oversees the member election process to include

- \* Preparation and mailing of an interest inquiry to all staff asking them to submit their names, if interested in running for a seat on the council;
- \* Preparing the member ballots
- \* Mailing the ballots
- \* Tabulating the ballots
- \* Contacting newly elected members seeking the commitment to serve

This year, membership apportionment needs to be reviewed. The committee will also include this task. Each category is to be represented on this committee.

Volunteers are

- \* Chair and Professional – Dr. Lin Harper
- \* Executive – Rusty Anderson
- \* Skilled Craftsman – Tommy Dye
- \* Gulf Coast – Sally Donovan
- \* Clerical – Cheryl Burnette
- \* GCRL – Trisha Wilbanks
- \* Technical – John Green
- \* Service Maintenance – Mary Virgil
- \* Stennis – Keri Hensarling

## 8.3 Military Recognition

Discussion was held on a way to recognize and list those staff, faculty, and students who have been militarily activated. It was

suggested we consider posting a list on our Web site for people to be able to check.

## 9.0 Announcements

9.1 GCRL will hold it's annual Mardi Gras party on Monday, March 3, 2003. Everyone is invited to attend.

9.2 The March Staff Council meeting will be held on the Gulf Coast campus on Tuesday, March 4. Transportation will be provided. Vans will leave the motor pool at 8:15 a.m. SHARP!

## 10.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kim Busche  
Recording Secretary  
February 4, 2003

President Thames addressed Staff Council.

He began the discussion by proclaiming it was good to be alive!

### Budgets

The budget has recently been approved by the Mississippi legislature. This is historic because it has been done at the beginning of the legislative session. Generally the legislature waits until the end of the session before it approves the education budget. The legislature needed to show a commitment for higher education. This approved budget, approximately 230 million dollars, is for K through 12, senior and junior colleges.

Since 1999 Southern Mississippi has lost 17 million dollars in funding from the state of Mississippi. In addition, there are fixed costs, which we have no control over that have continued to rise. Examples are utilities, fringe benefits, and health care. On an average this has been an increase of approximately 2.5 million per year for a total of \$7.5 million since 1999. Added to the \$17 million in lost funding, this is a total of approximately \$24 million dollars. These are rounded-off figures, but they are very close. This means that our overall revenue is down since 1999, roughly \$24 million dollars. This means we have to do something to be more efficient.

Newspapers suggest a big increase in budgeted dollars. A good portion of these increased dollars is coming from a budget contingency fund. The legislature went and found surplus money everywhere it was available. This is one-time money, and unfortunately this money will not be available again. There is no way to replace this budget contingency fund in one year. We will have budget problems next year. It is anticipated that since it is an election year, there will be some sort of revenue collection, after the elections are over. Dr. Thames estimates this will be in some sort of a tax. Sales taxes are going down, and we only get money from sales tax if it comes in. Last year we did not receive monies we were appropriated simply because it did not come in.

Going from 9 colleges to 5

The bottom line for Southern Mississippi is we cannot ignore the loss of revenue. We cannot spend what we don't have. We must be more efficient. Budget concerns are evident all over our state as well as the nation. Currently 45 of the 50 states are experiencing the same budget constraints as we are. We need to reallocate our resources. The reorganization plan will not save us money; it will simply reallocate the funds and resources we have in a more efficient beneficial, manner by taking these funds out of administration and putting them into teaching. The majority of our revenues are spent on people. This is because this is who does the work, and this is who does the teaching. Therefore, if we can optimize the utility of our personnel, we get more out of our personnel. We are here to teach students. This is our primary motivation. That's why President Thames is here, and why each staff member is here. Staff members provide support for teaching. Many staff members teach along with their support jobs. If we did not have students, we would not be here. So we must make sure we give the students what they deserve and what they pay for.

We have had a significant tuition increase and have probably reached the limit on tuition for now. Our young students are able to pay just so much. We do not want to continue to increase tuition and hurt the students. But we have to maintain revenues. Tuition revenues are about as high as they can go for now.

This year after all has settled, Southern Miss will receive approximately \$1 million dollars more than it did last year from state appropriations. The reason for this is the legislature wanted to congratulate us for trying to become more efficient. The legislature gave Southern Miss, Miss. State, Ole Miss, and Jackson State \$500,000 each for reallocation. They gave the money to Southern

Mississippi because we had already done reallocation. They gave the money to the other universities because they hoped it would happen at those locations. Mississippi State retired a number of people, but they had a significant staff. If you look at the IHL Board management report, you will see that Southern Miss is very efficient. (Dr. Thames applauded the staff for their help with this.) The number of students per university employees ranks as follows: Miss. State has 3 students per employee, Ole Miss has 5 students per employee, and Southern Mississippi has 8 students per employee. This means we are more efficient in terms of this particular evaluation.

We have to become more efficient in the classroom. We need to get more credit hour production out of our faculty members or people who are qualified to be our faculty members. That is what this reorganization will do. It will allow a lot more teaching to be taught by those people who were previously in administration. This is what we mean when we emphasize we are reallocating away from administration and to teaching. All of the current administrators affected by this reallocation will have jobs here at Southern Miss as faculty members. They may not be administrators, but they will be faculty members. As president, Dr. Thames does not have tenure, but he does have tenure as a faculty member in the polymer science department. Administrators do not have tenure. They serve at the will of the president and the board of trustees.

This reorganization also allows for a more synergistic grouping of academic areas. These entities can be more efficient and effective by being part of a larger organization. If you look at our university before reorganization, we have colleges that are large and colleges that are small. Some of them are very small. When the IHL Board of Trustees looks at where to cut, and what's inefficient, they look at those small colleges. They see small amounts of credit hours, as well as not a lot of majors in these small colleges. This puts these smaller colleges at risk. There is approximately 2500 majors' difference between our smallest college and our larger college before we reorganize. After reorganization there is approximately 500 majors' difference. This means we will now have five relatively large colleges. We are now strong in all areas; thus, we are not at risk because the smaller units are now part of a larger college. This has great value to our university and to our faculty members. Some of this has gone unnoticed during the past few weeks. The synergy, the strength we develop, and the cost savings because we are getting more for the dollar from our administrators and because

they are going back into the classroom are the main reasons we developed this reorganization plan. Making USM a more efficient institution, thus preserving our institution, our history, and hopefully our jobs.

As long as there is work to do, and staff members do good work, there will be a place for them at Southern Miss. We are still going to have the same amount of work. Simple logic will answer the following questions. By making five colleges, will there be fewer people enrolling? No, our enrollment is up even though tuition was up. Will we still process the same amount of applications? Yes. Will we still have the same amount of work? Yes. Is that going to require people? Yes.

Now, if someone at this university, including the president, has not been doing anything for the past five years, his or her job is at risk. If employees haven't been doing anything but coming in reading the paper and drinking coffee, then their job is at risk. If you are an efficient employee, then it is doubtful there is any risk concerning your job. Dr. Thames feels the same way about his job. He is an employee just like each staff member. If Dr. Thames doesn't do his job, the IHL Board of Trustees could fire him. He told the IHL Board, "If I don't do my job, then get me out of there and put someone else in here."

All of the details on the reorganization have not been completed, but we have until July to get it done. We are not doing away with the Graduate School. We are eliminating that office, but we will still have graduate students. We are simply going to allow the graduate students to apply to the college that they want to go into. They will not apply to some central office where the paperwork has to be shuffled all over campus. Since he has become president, he has received correspondence from potential graduate students stating it has been four months since they turned in their application for graduate school, and they had not received an answer yet.....FOUR MONTHS! This is not a real efficient operation. Dr. Thames believes we can do a better job if those students send their applications directly to the school that they want to be admitted to. It certainly couldn't be any worse. The idea here is to help the students, improve efficiency, cut down on unnecessary paper flow, and get our job done and move on, so we have extra time to be more productive about what we do.

There is a reason why Dr. Thames has asked each staff member to become more customer friendly. Customer service is something that should be reemphasized to each employee every day. We are

here for the students. They are our livelihood. If we don't have students, we don't have jobs. Dr. Thames wants this university to grow to 20,000 students by the year 2007. Many people have questioned why this is a goal, and why should we work toward this? There is more job security with an increase in enrollment. The reason for this is because there is prestige in numbers. There is also revenue in numbers. Revenue is what we need. If you increase your student body population, you increase your tuition. Tuition is becoming a more important part of our income string than it ever has in the past. This year we have received roughly \$75 million in state appropriations, \$56 million in tuition, and about \$62 million in external monies.

Why are we talking about and concerning ourselves with research? \$62 million dollars is why. A lot of our staff are employed because of research. Their jobs are funded from this revenue. This \$62 million pays for salaries, supplies, rent, lights, water, gas, and health insurance benefits. This money is like the money that comes from the state of Mississippi, it just does a little different job. Research is intensive instruction. Make no doubt about it, research is intensive instruction. There is not a difference between the two. One form of instruction is standing in front of a class giving a lecture while the class takes notes, then has an exam. There is another type of instruction where the instructor sits one-on-one or one-on-two or one-on-three to discuss a project - a project to solve a problem that no one else in the world has ever solved. This is called intensive instruction or research. We are interested in research because it brings money to our institution and keeps us afloat. Dr. Dvorak has a goal of reaching \$100 million by 2005. We have to go from \$62 million to \$100 million. The reason why is because the revenues from the state are going down, and we have to offset that downward trend. Dr. Thames does not expect this trend to change within the next five years.

What Southern Miss has to do is help ourselves. How do we do this? We do it by generating more money with research. The area where we can make the most immediate short-term impact is with research dollars. This campus is filled with extremely intelligent people. Southern Mississippi is the finest academic institution in this state. This is why Dr. Thames sent his children to school here. The national average of proposals for grants sent in versus those that are funded is about one in four. Southern Mississippi's average is about 65 %. We are about two out of every three. That is how competent our people are. This is a tribute to our faculty and staff

who help put those proposals together. We must get efficient with research dollars.

We also generate money with tuition. That's when students are in the classrooms being taught. This is why it is so important for as many of us as possible to spend our time in the classroom. Dr. Thames has been employed at Southern Miss since 1965. Not one semester has gone by since 1965 that he has not taught a class. He did not officially teach one this past semester, he taught two to three classes but was not professor of record. Even while being an administrator for 18 years, he still taught classes. This is an administrator's job. They are teachers first, then administrators second. So, who should object to being in the classroom? That is why faculty come to the university in the first place. This is what this restructure plan calls for, faculty to do what they do best. Our institution will not suffer. Our institution will be better off because of it, and we will be healthy. We are not out of the woods because of our revenues. We have to offset the decline of our state dollars. Next year will be a very dry year also unless the legislature raises taxes somewhere to get some more money. Dr. Thames believes they will because the elections will be over, and it will be the first year of a four-year term.

Questions -

1. In the year 2000 USM was number 2 in state enrollment but number 7 in state appropriations. Has anything been done to try to correct this?

Yes, without going into a lot of detail, we did find some opportunity for additional revenue for us that we ought to have been getting in the past. We will get those revenues this year. This will amount to roughly an additional \$1 million dollars. There are a lot of things that go on behind the scenes that are sensitive, but Dr. Thames assured us the pull for this institution is intense.

2. Are there any plans for support areas such as financial affairs, financial aid, physical plant, and student services to be reorganized? If so, how long will it be before we will know?

We tackled the academic part of reorganization first because this is where the vast part of our money is spent. If you want to make a change that has a significant impact, then you go where the majority of your money is spent. We do need to look at how we do business. Every office can do things a little differently to be more efficient. There are things that everyone has thought of that would save a little time that would allow you to produce more for the university at the end of the day. Things that would not make you

any more tired, or work you any harder, just work smarter. These are things that we need to do. Let's take a look at things we are doing and make sure it is the right way. This doesn't mean people have done things wrong. This simply means that unless you make an obvious effort to reevaluate the way things are done, we are not trying to be as efficient as we can be. We need to rethink how we use our time. Do we need to continue doing things we have done for the past 30 years? Is the current way the best way to get a task done? Can things be done using less time? Can things be done electronically? Dr. Thames encourages each staff member to speak up if they have suggestions on how things can be done more efficiently. Please talk to your supervisors. Make notes on how things can be done more efficiently. There is not one person who has the lock on all of the good ideas. Everyone has good ideas. These good ideas need to be brought forth and thought about. Yes, we need to think about what we do on a daily basis. Can we do it better? We are going to ask everyone to do this, thus making sure "no rock would be left unturned on this campus." There are ways to do things better. We are going to find these ways. At the end of the day, when we get through with this process, Dr. Thames believes that we will feel better about ourselves because we will know we did a good day's job and earned our pay. Our university will benefit from this. The students will benefit tremendously. Hopefully, we will be paid better as a result of this. Does Dr. Thames believe there will be wholesale reorganization? No

3. A number of the staff across the university teach classes, which classifies them as adjunct faculty. How do you feel the change in reorganization will affect them with regard to this capacity?

The effects to them should be very little, if at all. First of all, some staff teach certain classes because there is no one else on staff who has that particular skill. Secondly, if we already have adjunct faculty on staff, we are going to take care of our own first before we go out and look for someone else to help. You take care of your family first before you go elsewhere. Part of the reason we are putting our administrators back into the classroom is to keep from hiring so many adjunct faculty from outside the university. Dr. Thames doesn't know every detail or instance related to this, but if our enrollment stays up there should be very little, if any effect, on these particular staff members. However, if we lose enrollment, it could affect a lot of us. This is why Dr. Thames wants to get more students enrolled in our institution. We will take care of our own first.

Mike Giles thanked Dr. Thames for letting us know we would take care of our own family first.

4. The numbers presented by the IHL management report show us to be the most efficient university in the state, but our salaries are not in-line with other universities in the state. What can be done about this?

Numbers can be deceiving, and sometimes it takes simple logic to see the whole picture. There was a time, not too many years ago, when the faculty at Southern Miss was the highest-paid faculty in the state of Mississippi. The staff pay rate was ranked high as well. Now we are a distant third. Why?

First, we didn't get tuition increases because we didn't ask for them. Our other revenues haven't gone up significantly either. Second, in Dr. Thames' opinion we have expanded our institution, and there are more people taking money out of the same pot which hasn't grown. We must get our enrollment up and revenues up. We must look at every dollar, pound on every table, and be as efficient as we can until we get back to where we need to be. We are a fairly efficient institution. The IHL Board of Trustees put the management report together that showed Southern Miss was a very efficient institution. But, we are not as efficient as we need to be. Until we can get our revenues up, we have got to become as efficient as we can be. This doesn't mean working people to death, or working them like slaves, it means reorganizing ourselves to get more done in an eight-hour day.

Dr. McFall interjected that when the IHL Board published their management report they actually didn't realize what their numbers showed. The fact that we are very efficient already had been pointed out to the IHL Board several times. They now understand exactly what their report shows.

5. Dr. Thames was commended by Myra Herndon for his reorganization plan. She feels that it will be beneficial for our university, and it was long in coming. She has heard the phrase for years that we have too many chiefs and not enough Indians. She did caution that we should not grow at a rate that would hurt our education quality.

Dr. Thames responded that anyone who knew him would know that his main concern is the quality of education. Southern Mississippi is a fine academic institution. We want to maintain that status and improve it. We want to be the best university in the nation for what we do. This is a goal that is absolutely in our reach. It is a great institution to work at. You can be as good as you want to be here.

That is what this administration wants for each employee. It doesn't take much more to be the best than it does to be half as good. Dr. Thames credited his father for teaching him, "It costs as much to feed a thoroughbred as it does a plug." One of our biggest problems is having people at Southern Mississippi realize how good we are. We need to prove to our selves how good we are. We don't realize it now. We don't need to be arrogant, but it is not arrogant to be confident that you are pretty good at doing your job. There are people on our staff who have no equal in America. We need to be humble but pleased about this. Southern Miss is a place that will allow you to reach your goals. This is what this administration wants for each employee.

6. In the five new colleges, how many staff positions will need to be filled? Who will pick these staff, and what will happen to the staff working in the administrative offices of our current nine colleges? There is a wide range in our estimated cost reallocation because each college will be different. You cannot take each person or college and cookie-cut them to be like others. Some colleges will require more staff than others. It has not been determined where the current administrative staff in the dean's offices will go. There will be the need to continue to do the same work that is done now, even though units are being merged. Some of these staff will be distributed to other areas on campus where they are needed. Some of these staff may choose to move to another department. There is a chance for some employees to better themselves with this reorganization. There is no anticipated job loss. There is work to be done for those employees that want to work and who do a good job.

7. We have heard rumors that the university logo will be changed. Why at a time when dollars are short are we changing the logo? We will have to print new letterhead and other university materials. This will be very expensive for each department.

Dr. Thames asked if this was in reference to the athletic logo. Several people on Staff Council voiced that it was the impression that the university logo was changing as well as the athletic logo. Dr. Thames had not heard anything about a new university logo. He questioned Dr. McFall, Dr. Moore, and Dr. Grimes if they had heard anything about a new university logo. They all responded that they had not.

At this point Kathy Hayman stated that the new athletic logo is impacting the bookstore seriously because the merchandise currently in the store will no longer be official or wanted by the

community. This is inefficient at this time at our university. She is not against the change and feels the new athletic logo looks great. However, what she is being told by the Southern Miss licensing people is that she must sell all of her old logo merchandise by this fall. This is not going to happen. There seems to be some miscommunication about how this new logo process is developing. Gene Fitts, with the university–licensing department, is beginning to understand some of these issues, but there are still lots of concerns.

Dr. Thames let us know that companies, such as Nike, had advised us that our logo was too complicated to print. We needed to have a logo that was simpler to print. The attack eagle is very complex. Also, we have too many different shades of gold. The Vegas Gold is nice but cannot be used on market products because of the ink. The material must be dyed with the vegas gold color at the time it is produced. We needed to simplify our athletic logo and standardize the gold color. Now companies can produce our products, and they can be marketed more readily. You will now be able to find Southern Miss products on the shelves beside the merchandise from other universities in our area. This should increase our income. Kathy Hayman disagreed with this, stating that in order to get Nike to print our logo on a particular garment to be sold in the bookstore, she has to buy 600 pieces of that garment. It will take awhile to sell 600 pieces of a garment. She is also being told by our licensing people that the new athletic logo will be the only logo she can sell. She will no longer be able to sell even the traditional “Southern Miss” wording on a sweatshirt. This is the main thing the student body wants. Articles of clothing that say “Southern Miss.”

Dr. Thames suggested she meet with the licensing people and make sure they understand what the student body wants and needs.

Kathy advised that the licensing department was coming around on some issues, but it is very slow. Dr. Thames expressed his confidence in her ability to clear this matter up. We need to make sure our name is out there, for everyone to see.

Dr. Thames thanked everyone for the chance to address Staff Council. President Posey thanked Dr. Thames for rearranging his busy schedule to address Staff Council.

Dr. Grimes, Dr. Moore, and Dr. McFall then answered questions the Staff Council might have.

We have existing staff, in offices that are being combined in the reorganization plan, who do not know what the status of their current job is. They aren't being told what to expect. The university

is still posting positions to the outside public for positions that could be filled by these current staff members. Why aren't we taking care of our family first by letting these existing staff members know if they should pursue some of the openings we are posting? There is a fear among staff that when and if the job they are in is dissolved there will not be any available positions because they have already been filled by off-campus applicants. Is a hiring freeze being considered until all existing staff are reassigned? Dr. McFall responded that there would be no hiring freeze. Jobs will continue to be posted as they are received. The provost office will review each job-posting request related to academics to see if it is still necessary.

Dr. Grimes responded:

The university is here and will continue to operate. We need staff to continue to do the jobs they do now, because the workload will not be going away. There will not be a monumental shift on July 1. We will continue to do business as we are doing now. The offices in existence will need to remain open until all of the details of the reorganization are worked out. There is the possibility that some of the offices will remain open to handle the current work-load that is not going away. An example of this is nursing. This is a close-knit group. Dr. Grimes believes there will be little change in this office, with the exception of the move to the old Albertson's building. There are other units that will have little or no change. The changes that impact these offices will be slow and could take a year or two. Staff is encouraged to be proactive and start looking at the units they work in. Are there ways you can help us transition? At a library faculty meeting last week, there was good dialogue. Dr. Grimes asked the library faculty if they would help develop a plan on how the library faculty and staff will help achieve the \$100 million research goal by 2005 and the 20,000-student goal by 2007. Libraries are critical to universities, and are changing the way they do things. While this university will not go totally electronic, there are possibly things that can be done electronically to maximize efficiency. The library faculty and staff know this area best; thus, they should help formulate the plan. It is possible for other units to sit down and review their processes to see how they can also help achieve the university goals. The way staff could assist with these changes is to help suggest better ways to get the

current jobs done. Another way to help is to look at the current processes that are done now. Is there a better way?  
With the College of Marine Sciences becoming part of the College of Science and Technology, where will the research lab fall in the new reorganization?

It was a hard decision to eliminate the college of marine sciences. Dr. Grimes worked hard to create this college. It is now in the top 10 - 15 marine sciences colleges in the nation. In putting the college of marine sciences into the college of science and technology, we realize there are some synergies that we can pull some other units into that college making it a much stronger, healthier, and more robust college. While Dr. Grimes personally hopes to see an endowed school coming out of this, he is willing to let the college of marine sciences go for the betterment of the bigger picture. Endowed schools are an excellent mark for a university.

Who will the Research Lab answer to?

All of the centers are housed within two departments that will all go together to the College of Science and Technology. It will not be broken up; all of this unit will go together.

Dr. Grimes, do you feel that losing the designation of a college will have any effect on the national or regional reputation of that unit?  
No. I don't think we will lose prestige. We will be able to pull several schools together to become more comprehensive. The reputation of a school is in what they produce, not in the name they carry.

Nursing is a fine example. Dr. Dvorak found on the Web a listing of the top 10 nursing schools in the United States. They are all schools not colleges. We are very proud of our nursing school and don't feel the reputation will be hurt at all by moving back to a school again.

We are currently working on getting our nursing program endowed, and we hope we are very close to having this done. This sends a very strong message. This is a message of commitment, excellence, and expectation. Working to get these schools endowed is very important to us. It will help us ensure funding, since we cannot count on state funding as we have in the past.

What is going to happen to the Graduate School? How is it going to be merged into the colleges? What are the implications for the departments? Who in the colleges will assume the extra responsibilities, considering we are already working very hard?

At this time, we are currently eight students to each employee and don't need to increase this ratio. We should actually try to get back

to the national average, which is five students to each employee. Jim Hollandsworth has been asked to chair a committee that will come forward with a plan to redistribute the Graduate School into the five colleges. This is to be done in a few weeks. Part of this is to see if we need to hire more people. Dr. Grimes said we are certainly not going to be getting rid of the people we have now. There are some functions that will need to be centralized. An example is data entry. This needs to be kept in a central office for quality control and will not be done in the different colleges. Where this central office will be located has not been decided yet. Dr. Hollandsworth's committee will determine this. There will need to be staff for this office.

With the reorganization, could this result in classifying certain staff as para-professionals, where they have the specific expertise in the kinds of administrative areas needed to help facilitate that area? That is a good idea, and Dr. Grimes believes we need programs like this. He asked that the staff member suggesting this become proactive with this idea.

Will Dr. Hollandsworth's committee address keeping consistency among the graduate divisions in each college?

Yes. The graduate students are very important to us. They are not the largest component of students but will be a very important piece of growing to 20,000. Particularly on the Gulf Coast where you have people who already have master's degrees and possibly doctorate degrees but still want to take advanced courses. This automatically puts them as an undeclared graduate student. We see a lot of nontraditional students who already have degrees, but are interested in expanding their knowledge. The graduate program is extremely important, and we see it growing.

In regards to the Gulf Coast campus, we are concerned about what, if any, impact we will see? We have a chair who is currently posting a position that will be absorbed into another area in July. He has stated that he will be hiring a person to fill this current vacancy, and if the position is removed in July then it will be the employee's problem not his. These issues are floating around with no one giving any direction.

Dr. Hudson is in charge of the Gulf Coast. Dr. Grimes encourages anyone who works at the Coast campuses to talk with Dr. Hudson about concerns they might have. He is trying to get around to the different departments. The reorganization process needs to be as

seamless as possible. We want each unit to have the same standards as everyone else. We will be working very hard to make sure Southern Miss runs as one unit with different locations. Will the staff currently working in the administration offices of each college now have to reapply for the same position in the new colleges? What is the procedure that they are to follow?

We don't have a procedure in place at this time. We do need to work quickly on this. We are going to take care of our family and not displace them too much. This is something we are working on now. The committees are being formed to help find the new deans for the new colleges. Will the staff be well represented on these committees?

We will be going public with the five committees. We have had tremendous numbers of volunteers from all areas (faculty, students, and staff) to help with this task. A lot of good people will not be able to serve due to the overwhelming response to our call for volunteers. We have established five very good committees. They will be composed as follows:

10 - 12 Faculty

1 Cabinet coordinator

2 Staff representatives

3 Students - 1 undergraduate and 1 graduate

4-6 shareholders - area business professionals

The cabinet coordinators are

Dr. Joe Paul for the College of Education and Psychology

Dr. Cynthia Moore for the College of Arts and Letters

Dr. Tim Hudson for the College of Business and Economic Development

Dr. Angie Dvorak for the College of Health

Dr. Jay Grimes for the College of Science and Technology  
Dr. McFall addressed the Staff Council

We can expect flat funding and with the increased tuition, we will be able to budget. The one concern is there were state appropriations that we did not receive.

The legislature had several things that were in prior bills that were not approved, and this was good. Section 44 of the business bill will be signed on February 5, at three P.M. and reads

"It is the intention of the legislature that none of the funds appropriated by this act shall be expended for increased charges for state employee and teacher health insurance premiums rates set by the department of finance administration in excess of the fiscal year 2003 premium rates for health insurance."

We need to know this is here. Dr. McFall is unclear of the goal of this statement, but it could be to keep DFA from increasing the employee portion of the health insurance. This is a good strategy if none of the state agencies could pay for that increase.

Questions –

The research lab has always been a line item. It is not now. Why?

The research lab is still a line item. The way the legislature does this is certain units, such as the vet school and the medical center, are specific line items. Then there are subsidiaries, like the research lab, that are not specifically named, but the money is budgeted in a lump sum. The GCRL budget is actually up \$35,000 dollars.

Will the research lab budget be included in the budget of the College of Science and Technology?

No, the budgets will be kept separate.

Dr. Grimes responded that the GCRL appropriations will remain as GCRL appropriations and will not be mixed with anyone else. We must be very careful not to mingle these monies.

What is the ratio of faculty to staff here at Southern Miss?

2 staff for every faculty

Why, then, on the search committees, will there be 10 faculty to 2 staff members?

This is an academic search. If we were searching for someone in business and finance, we would choose the committee accordingly. A more realistic number would be to know the ratio of academic staff to faculty. A large amount of staff does not work in the academic areas.

When the search is over, will we have a voice in the selection of these deans?

The selection process should be similar to the president's search. A forum will be set up for questions to be asked of the finalist by the different campus groups. We have always done this, and it is a good process. The same process should be followed when the selection phase begins. The finalist will visit both Hattiesburg and the Coast in order to attend forums in both locations.

Are there any plans for an early retirement program, such as the one at Miss. State?

This has not been discussed.

President Posey thanked Dr. McFall, Dr. Moore, and Dr. Grimes for taking the time from their busy schedules to address Staff Council.

She also thanked the staff who attended the speaker session of the Staff Council meeting.